



ADVERTISEMENT

SCROLL DOWN FOR CONTENT

[x] CLOSE



BUSINESS

# Tesla left hundreds of injuries out of its workplace reports, California regulator says

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

with SUBSCRIPTION

**\$4/week**



A Tesla Model S outside the automaker's factory in Fremont, Calif. (Paul Sakuma / Associated Press)

By JOSH EIDELSON AND DANA HULL | BLOOMBERG

MARCH 6, 2020 | 12:03 PM



For years, Tesla Inc. has rebutted concerns about worker safety at its main assembly plant by describing reviews from a California regulator as vindication.

But new documents and statements omitted hundreds of injuries that

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

with **SUBSCRIPTION**

Division of Occupational Safety and Health, or Cal/OSI  
that month for failing to properly record other injuries

**\$4/week**

tion

The documents, some of which were obtained through a public-records request, undermine statements Tesla executives have made about its plant in Fremont in the San Francisco Bay Area. Chief Executive Elon Musk dedicated a portion of an October 2018 earnings call to briefing investors about workplace safety efforts. He said Cal/OSHA had investigated the company and concluded it had not been underreporting injuries. Last month, Tesla said a review by the agency showed that the company's record keeping was 99% accurate.

But Cal/OSHA wasn't focused on verifying the overall accuracy of Tesla's injury record-keeping when it inspected the company in 2018, according to spokesman Frank Polizzi. The agency also can't verify the claim that Laurie Shelby, Tesla's environmental, health and safety vice president, made in the February [blog post](#).

Ad removed. [Details](#)

Tesla didn't respond to requests for comment.

Workplace safety at Tesla faded

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

with SUBSCRIPTION

carmaker overstated the strides it was making in improving workplace safety, according to the [Center for Investigative Reporting](#) and others called

**\$4/week**

is by

Government officials rely on accurate summary data from companies to determine which workplaces need the closest scrutiny, said Deborah Berkowitz, the former chief of staff for the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

“If companies don’t report accurately, it has really an impact on where the agency ends up using its scarce resources,” said Berkowitz, who directs the worker safety and health program at the National Employment Law Project, a pro-labor nonprofit. “It’s very important to the agency that the summary data be accurate so that it doesn’t portray a workplace that’s safer than it really is.”

ADVERTISEMENT

In retrospect, Tesla’s handling of the workplace safety scrutiny appears similar to how it dealt with a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration investigation into its Autopilot feature in 2017. The agency concluded that the controversial driver-assistance system wasn’t defective and didn’t need to be recalled — partly based on a finding that Teslas with Autopilot installed were crashing 40% less than Teslas without it. But [a study](#) released last year concluded that the data Tesla handed over to NHTSA were incomplete or contradictory. The agency has said it stands by the finding.

In its December memorandum, Cal/OSHA said the 2018 summary data Tesla provided to the government was missing roughly three dozen incidents that were listed in its logs, or 4% of the total. For 2016, 44% of the incidents weren’t included.

The \$400 citation Cal/OSHA issued last month to Tesla for failing to properly report workplace safety incidents, the agency said Tesla failed to properly

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by

reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

with SUBSCRIPTION

Cal/OSHA said in its December memorandum that dis] **\$4/week** en  
 companies learn about incidents and add them to their  
 their summary to the government. But the agency said that when there are “significant  
 numerical disparities,” a company should consider whether its processes are “adequate  
 to verify accuracy.”

ADVERTISEMENT

The government uses the annual summary logs to calculate total work-related injury and illness rates, measured as the number of incidents per year per 100 full-time employees. For 2018, the Bureau of Labor Statistics said the overall rate for automobile manufacturing was 6.1. The figures Tesla reported on its summary log for 2018 add up to a rate of 6.2. Including the additional 36 incidents that Cal/OSHA says were omitted would raise Tesla’s rate to 6.5.

Tesla’s Fremont plant produces the Model S, X and 3 vehicles and is starting to build Model Y, a new crossover slated to begin customer deliveries this month. The company began making the Model 3 at a new factory near Shanghai in December and aims to begin construction of a plant near Berlin this year.

BUSINESS



**Your guide to our new economic reality.**

Get our free busine

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by

reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

**with SUBSCRIPTIO**

You may occasionally receive promotional content from the Los Angeles Times

**\$4/week**

Josh Eidelson and Dana Hull

---

MORE FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

---

BUSINESS

**Column: A \$336 Band-Aid for a cut finger? Our healthcare system is nuts**

49 minutes ago

---

BUSINESS

**Tesla called her a criminal. Her fight could be a milestone for employees' rights**

1 hour ago

---

TECHNOLOGY

**California's new contact-tracing app: What you need to know**

Dec. 7, 2020

---

BUSINESS

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

**with SUBSCRIPTION**

# \$4/week

## Around the Web

Ads by Revcontent



**US Doctors (2020): Why Creams Arent the Way Forward for Sagging Skin**

BEVERLY HILLS MD



**These Twins Were Called the "Most Beautiful in the World," Just See Them Now**

POST FUN



**Ex-Costco Staff Reveal Which Products To Buy No Matter The Cost.**

BETTERBE



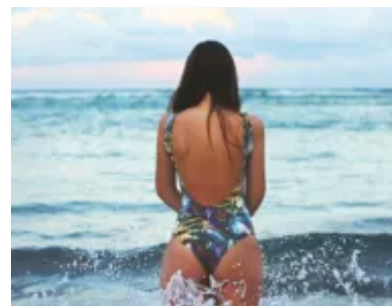
**California Launches New Policy for Cars Used Less Than 50 Miles Per Day**

EXPERTS IN MONEY



**California: Say Bye To Expensive Solar Panels If You Own A Home in Alamo**

ENERGYBILLCRUNCHER



**The States Where Americans Don't Want To Live Anymore**

MONEYWISE.COM

**CORONAVIRUS AND PANDEMIC >**

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

with **SUBSCRIPTION**

'A turning point': Britain begins COVID-19 vaccinations

**\$4/week**

Los Angeles City Council panel seeks to scale back potential LAPD job cuts

Trump administration chose to not lock in more Pfizer coronavirus vaccine doses

Many aren't buying public officials' 'stay-at-home' message. Experts say there's a better way

## Cases statewide »

**1,385,689**  
confirmed

**20,054**  
deaths

As of December 7, 10:11 p.m. Pacific

ADVERTISEMENT

LATEST BUSINESS ›

BUSINESS

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

with SUBSCRIPTION

Fender chief Andy Mooney tunes into the market with a \$13.5-milli

Dec. 7, 2020

**\$4/week**

BUSINESS

Uber sells its self-driving vehicles arm

Dec. 7, 2020

CALIFORNIA

California unemployment fraud amid COVID-19 pandemic may total \$2 billion, Bank of America says

Dec. 7, 2020

BUSINESS

Bill Gross seeks to end dispute over lawn sculpture. His neighbor is having none of it

Dec. 7, 2020

ADVERTISEMENT

Subscribe for unlimited access

Follow Us



Copyright © 2020, Los Angeles Times | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [CA Notice of Collection](#) | [Do Not Sell My Personal Information](#)

By continuing to use our site, you agree to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You can learn more about how we use cookies by reviewing our [Privacy Policy](#). [Close](#)

Limited-Time Offer

with SUBSCRIPTION